

Pg 32 - Walter Cunningham scene

Scene - Atticus, Scout, and Walter Cunningham sit at the table in the Finch house

Atticus: How do your father's fields look this year, Walter?

Walter: Reason I can't pass the first grade, Mr. Finch, is I've had to stay out ever' spring an' help Papa with the choppin', but there's another'n at the house now that's field size.

Scout: Did you pay a bushel of potatoes for him?

Atticus: *shaking his head* Hush, Scout.

Walter piles food on his plate.

Atticus: Have you had any problems with the boll weevils in your cotton, Walter?

Walter: Do you have any molasses in the house, Mr. Finch?

Atticus calls: Calpurnia

Calpurnia comes into the dining room from the kitchen.

Atticus: Calpurnia, would you bring the syrup pitcher for Walter?

Calpurnia returns with the syrup pitcher on a silver platter. Walter pours a generous serving of syrup over his vegetables and then his meat. Calpurnia stands waiting for him to finish.

Scout: Walter, what in the sam hill are you doing?

Walter quickly replaces the pitcher on the platter with a clatter, and he puts his hands in his lap and ducks his head, ashamed.

Atticus: *shaking head* Scout, that's enough.

Scout: *(in protest)* "But he's gone and drown his dinner in syrup! He's poured it all over-"

Calpurnia: Scout, can I see you in the kitchen for a moment?

Calpurnia and Scout leave the dining room and enter the kitchen.

Calpurnia: *(fiercely whispering)* There's some folks who don't eat like us, but you ain't called on to contradict 'em at the table when they don't. That boy's yo comp'ny, and if he wants to eat up the tablecloth, you let him, you hear?

Scout: He ain't company Cal, he's just a Cunningham--

Calpurnia: Hush your mouth! Don't matter who they are, anybody who sets foot in this house's yo compa'ny, and don't you let me catch you remarkin' on their ways like you was so high and mighty! Yo' folks might be better'n the Cunninghams, but it don't count for nothin' the way you're disgracin' 'em- if you can't act fit to eat at the table, you can just set here and eat in the kitchen!

Scout, humiliated, walks into the dining room, retrieves her plate, and goes into the kitchen with Cal.

Scout: Just you wait, Cal. I'll fix you! One of these days, when you ain't lookin, I'll go off and drown myself in Barker's Eddy and then you'll be sorry! Besides, you already got me in trouble once today: you taught me how to write and it is all your fault!

Calpurnia: Hush your fussin!